

## CHAPTEE XXXI

### SERIOUS ILLNESS IN HOSPITAL—VIEWS ON THE FUTURE OF HIMSELF AND THE REPUBLICAN PARTY

ON February 5, 1918, Roosevelt went to a hospital in New York for treatment of an abcess on his thigh and subsidiary abcesses in his ears which were due to the poisoning of his system by the equatorial fever that he had incurred while on his Brazilian trip. His condition was so serious at the time that on February 8 an unfounded rumor of his death was circulated.

While in the hospital, on February 21, 1918, he wrote a long letter to his friend Sir Arthur Lee, member of the British Parliament, in which he said in regard to American feeling about England's course in the war:

"I think that this country now as a whole believes England has been making and is making a great effort. The trouble is that it believes it in an aloof way, and, what is much worse, it looks with similar aloofness upon its own effort. In my judgment, the way to render help to the Allies is primarily to wake America to its own shortcomings as regards its own effort, to enlighten it as to the need of making that effort quickly and formidably felt; or in other words, to struggle as hard as possible to increase our weight in the war. It would be a far more difficult thing for me to get our country speeded to action by knowledge of England's effort than to get it speeded to action by knowledge of its own shortcomings and duties.

"Almost without exception in every speech, I speak of the tremendous nature of the British effort, as well of course

as of the French effort, and say that we owe  
our safety  
purely to the British fleet and the French  
and British  
armies, that this ignoble position must end,  
and that, to